

PUBLIC HEALTH REPORT

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NO OUTBREAKS or laboratory confirmed individual cases of influenza have been reported in California since the termination of the epidemic of influenza which occurred about a year ago.

The U. S. Communicable Disease Center reports that the situation is similar throughout the nation, with only sporadic reports of laboratory confirmed cases of Influenza A having come to its attention.

The department's Influenza Surveillance Unit is again using a variety of public and private agencies as listening posts to detect early occurrence of influenza and influenza-like illnesses in the community.

The surveillance network reports the following: School absenteeism, which involves the observation of some 100,000 children, is running at the normal expected rate of 6 to 8 per cent; employee absenteeism at several industrial plants and public agencies is normal and without any unusual absenteeism reported so far this year; reports of respiratory illness among various population groups, and including institutions and hospitals, show no indication of unseasonal increases in influenza-like illness.

The department recommends routine annual immunization of persons at all ages who suffer from chronic debilitating disease; also pregnant women, and all persons 65 years of age and older. The commercially available influenza vaccine is an aqueous, polyvalent preparation containing three strains of Type A and one strain of Type B killed influenza virus and is produced with the same composition by several manufacturers.

Survival rates for patients with cancer have been computed by the department through 237 billion arithmetic calculations on electronic data processing machines.

The tabulations, performed by the Bureau of Vital Statistics and Data Processing, describe survival rates by patient age and sites of cancer among the 110,000 cases of neoplasm in the California Tumor Registry. The information will be published late this year in a monograph, "Cancer Registration and Survival in California."

The Los Angeles City Health Department has joined a nationwide U. S. Public Health Service

study to evaluate the effectiveness of INH (isonicotinic acid hydrazide) in preventing reactivation of tuberculous disease.

Selected patients with inactive tuberculosis will be given INH for one year. They will be evaluated by x-ray examination at the end of the year and then annually for several years. Individual reports will be combined with those from other areas in the nation to determine whether reactivation of disease can be prevented.

If INH prophylaxis proves successful for this group of patients, a powerful technique will be added to aid in the eradication of tuberculosis. Previous studies using the drug have shown that children can be protected from many of the complications of primary tuberculosis.

A training plan for nursing home administrators as a step toward improvement of patient care has been initiated by the State Health Department in a contract with the Attending Staff Association of Rancho Los Amigos Hospital, Los Angeles.

Oxides of nitrogen concentrations of over 3.0 parts per million in the atmosphere have been measured in Los Angeles on two recent occasions. A value of 3.0 ppm represents that district's "first alert" level, and marks the first instances in which air pollutants other than ozone have reached the Los Angeles first alert values.

The concentrations were not considered to present a danger to the public health. However, they are very high values for the atmosphere of communities and present a number of important problems. Since these concentrations are already high, there is concern over further increases. In addition to the concern over oxides of nitrogen because of toxic effects, these compounds at present concentration levels react in the atmosphere with hydrocarbons to produce smog.

Oxides of nitrogen are produced from combustion sources. Motor vehicle exhaust is one of the most important of these. It has been estimated that motor vehicles contribute more than half of all the oxides of nitrogen found in the Los Angeles atmosphere.